



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**MUSIC TEACHERS'S PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS  
OF THE MUSIC STUDIES OF THE MALAYSIAN  
DIPLOMA IN TEACHING**

**MAH KOK HENG**

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**By**

**MAH KOK HENG**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of Requirement for the Degree of Master of Science**

**March 2002**

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in  
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

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**Chairman: Chan Cheong Jan, D.Lit.**

**Faculty: Human Ecology**

This study sought to examine the perceptions of music teachers towards the effectiveness of the Music Studies of the Malaysian Diploma in Teaching or better known as the *Kursus Diploma Perguruan Malaysia* [KDPM] with reference to its teaching-learning strategies, acquisition of classroom-based skills, and music teaching skills. The study was prompted by the growing concern about the performance of college-trained music teachers in general, indicating that the KDPM Music Studies may not have adequately equipped graduating teachers with sufficient teaching skills.

Questionnaires and interviews were administered to generate the data required for this study. The interviews were carried out to confirm results gathered through questionnaires and to pursue interesting lines of inquiry as they develop. The study utilised a variety of statistical analysis techniques on the quantifiable data obtained, ranging from descriptive statistics to *t*-tests and *F* tests for group differences.



The research findings indicate that generally, most of the KDPM music teachers who participated in this study perceived the teaching-learning strategies to be effective and agreed in varying degrees that the KDPM Music Studies had been effective in helping them acquire classroom-based skills and music teaching skills. Though positively perceived, the findings also revealed inadequacies in specific teaching-learning strategies and acquisition of teaching skills such as incorporating the use of technology in music education; catering for integration and variety in classroom teaching; teaching music and movement activities associated with western art music; teaching fingering of notes for the alto recorder; and helping student teachers acquire and form musical concepts through the playing of musical instruments.

Statistical tests indicate that there are significant differences of perceptions between groups of respondents in the research sample towards the acquisition of classroom-based skills and music teaching skills. Respondents with the STPM entry qualification perceived the acquisition of classroom-based skills more positively than respondents with the SPM/SPMV entry qualifications. Respondents with prior music qualifications perceived the acquisition of music teaching skills more positively than respondents without prior music qualifications.

It is hoped that the findings of the study will contribute towards improving the effectiveness of the KDPM Music Studies and the selection of future candidates attending the programme.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Izajah Master Sains

**PERSEPSI GURU MUZIK TERHADAP KEBERKESANAN  
PENGAJIAN MUZIK KURSUS DIPLOMA  
PERGURUAN MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Kajian ini meneliti persepsi guru muzik lepasan maktab perguruan terhadap keberkesanan Pengajian Muzik Kursus Diploma Perguruan Malaysia [KDPM] dengan rujukan kepada strategi pengajaran-pembelajaran serta pemerolehan kemahiran berasaskan bilik darjah dan kemahiran pengajaran muzik. Kajian ini dilaksanakan sebab kekurangyakinan terhadap prestasi guru muzik lepasan maktab perguruan secara umum, menunjukkan bahawa Pengajian Muzik KDPM mungkin tidak dapat menyediakan guru muzik dengan kemahiran mengajar yang mencukupi.

Soal selidik dan sesi temubual diadakan untuk mendapatkan data kajian ini. Temubual dilaksanakan untuk mengesahkan keputusan data yang diperolehi melalui soal selidik serta mengumpul maklumat yang penting. Kajian ini menggunakan pelbagai teknik analisis statistik terhadap data kuantitatif yang dikumpul, meliputi statistik perihalan ke ujian-*t* dan ujian-*F* untuk perbezaan kumpulan.

Pada keseluruhannya, dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa persepsi majoriti guru muzik KDPM yang terlibat dalam kajian ini terhadap strategi pengajaran-pembelajaran adalah ianya berkesan dan dapat membantu mereka memperoleh kemahiran berasaskan bilik darjah dan pengajaran muzik. Walaupun secara umum tanggapan adalah baik, dapatan kajian telah menunjukkan beberapa kekurangan dalam strategi pengajaran-pembelajaran dan pemerolehan kemahiran yang spesifik seperti kemahiran menggunakan teknologi dalam pendidikan muzik; mengujudkan integrasi dan variasi dalam pengajaran di bilik darjah; mengajar aktiviti muzik dengan gerakan yang dikaitkan dengan muzik seni barat; mengajar penjarian not untuk rekoder alto; dan membantu guru pelatih memperoleh dan membentuk konsep muzik melalui permainan alat muzik.

Ujian statistik menunjukkan perbezaan signifikan antara kumpulan responden dalam sampel kajian terhadap pemerolehan kemahiran berasaskan bilik darjah dan kemahiran pengajaran muzik. Persepsi responden berkelulusan STPM terhadap kemahiran berasaskan bilik darjah adalah lebih positif daripada responden berkelulusan SPM/SPMV. Persepsi responden dengan kelayakan muzik sebelum latihan perguruan terhadap kemahiran pengajaran muzik adalah lebih positif daripada responden tanpa kelayakan muzik sebelum latihan perguruan.

Diharapkan sumbangan daripada dapatan kajian ini dapat meningkatkan lagi tahap Pengajian Muzik KDPM serta membantu dalam proses pemilihan calon yang akan menghadiri program ini.

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Last, but not least, I would like to register my appreciation to my wife, Susie, my children, and a host of friends and colleagues for their constant support, encouragement, understanding and patience throughout this study.



I certify that an Examination Committee met on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2002 to conduct the final examination of Mah Kok Heng on his Master of Science thesis entitled "Music Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Music Studies of the Malaysian Diploma in Teaching" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulation 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Date: 26 April 2002

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABRSM	Associate Board of the Royal Schools of Music
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
BPG	<i>Bahagian Pendidikan Guru</i> [Teacher Education Division]
CBTE	Competency-Based Teacher Education
CD-ROM	Compact Disc-Read Only Memory
EDA	Exploratory Data Analysis
EPRD	Education Planning and Research Division
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
KBSM	<i>Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah</i> [Integrated Secondary School Curriculum]
KBSR	<i>Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah</i> [Integrated Primary School Curriculum]
KDPM	<i>Kursus Diploma Perguruan Malaysia</i> [Malaysian Diploma in Teaching]
MIDI	Musical Instrument Digital Interface
PEMADAM	<i>Persatuan Mencegah Dadah Malaysia</i> [Association For The Prevention of Drug Abuse]
SKU	<i>Sasaran Kerja Utama</i> [Main Work Target]
SPM	<i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</i> [Malaysian Certificate of Education]
SPMV	<i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia Vokasional</i> [Malaysian Certificate of Vocational Education]
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Studies
STPM	<i>Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia</i> [Malaysian Higher Certificate of Education]
UPM	<i>Universiti Putra Malaysia</i>

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, a cabinet committee was set up in 1974 to study the extent to which the aims of the National Education Policy had been achieved. A result of the recommendations made by this committee in 1979, was the introduction of the Integrated Primary School Curriculum or *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah* [KBSR]. The aim of the new curriculum, introduced in pilot schools in 1982 and implemented in all primary schools in 1983, was to ensure that all primary school pupils acquire basic skills in the 3R's: reading, writing and arithmetic.

Under the KBSR, primary schooling is divided into two stages. Stage One consists of Year One to Three and Stage Two consists of the remaining years of Four to Six. The focus of the KBSR is on resource-based and activity-based learning with pupils learning at their own pace. An integrated approach is used in the teaching of the different subjects and continuous or formative evaluation is carried out. Music education within the KBSR is offered at both stages, that is, from Year One to Six with emphasis on activities such as singing, music with movement and playing of musical instruments.

Teacher education in Malaysia is conducted in teacher training colleges under the supervision of the Teacher Education Division, Ministry of Education. The teacher training colleges, which are located throughout the country, prepare primary and secondary school teachers through various pre-service and in-service programmes. As music education was introduced as part of the primary school curriculum since the inception of the KBSR, teacher training colleges have been entrusted with the task of training and educating student teachers to supplement the need for more music teachers at primary school level.

Competency in the teaching profession is determined by the success achieved by teachers in the execution of the tasks and functions associated with the teaching and learning process. The crucial question which remains to be answered is whether the student teacher, upon the successful completion of the teacher education programme, is competent enough to perform the duties and function prescribed in the programme according to the minimum levels of mastery required in the teaching profession.

In a report on a compilation of observations on college-trained teachers of Malaysia, the Federal School Inspectorate observed that teacher training colleges in Malaysia are only capable of producing teachers who are “mediocre” in knowledge and pedagogical skills (Mohd. Diah Nordin, 1989). The poor performance of these teachers is said to be attributed to an inadequate teacher education curriculum (Nor Hayati Abu Rasid, Kamaruddin Yaacob,

Abu Bakar Hashim & Rahil Mahyuddin, 1996; & Robiah Sidin, 1990) as well as the poor quality of candidates entering teacher training colleges (Abdul Ghani Taib & Fun, 1993; & Azmi Junid, 1989). The teacher education curriculum's provision to develop competence and mastery in classroom teaching may have fallen short of its objective. There is, therefore, a need to evaluate the teacher education curriculum in Malaysia.

This introductory chapter begins by presenting the background of the study followed by statement of the problem; the objectives of the study; the significance of the study; the definition of the keywords; the sequence of the study; and an overview of the subsequent chapters of the study.

### **Background of the Study**

As an early step towards preparing for quality education, the Education Ministry of Malaysia launched a Customer Charter in January, 1994 to raise the commitment of educators toward quality service at all levels of education. This commitment is transcribed in the Main Work Target or *Sasaran Kerja Utama* [SKU] of the Education Ministry, that is, to produce at least 30% of primary school teachers with diploma certification and 100% graduate teachers in the secondary school by the year 2000 (Malaysia, 1995).

The Malaysian Diploma in Teaching or better known as the *Kursus Diploma Perguruan Malaysia* [KDPM] introduced in June 1995 provides teacher education to student teachers entering the teaching profession. It is hoped that the KDPM will build familiarity amongst the student teachers with practical student-based learning. The effort to introduce the KDPM is in accordance with the aspirations of the Education Ministry to raise the standard and quality of Malaysian teachers as well as to provide quality education in primary schools. Through the KDPM, entry into the teaching profession has been upgraded from the basic teaching certificate to the Malaysian Diploma in Teaching, which is intended to raise the stature of teachers and attract candidates with better academic and cognitive capabilities into the teaching profession. The exercise is in accordance with the findings and the report of the National Teachers' Seminar (1995) which suggest that academic and professional excellence be acquired in the teacher education programme.

### **The KDPM Curriculum**

The KDPM Curriculum reinforces the academic component of subject specialisation by raising the acquisition of knowledge and skills to the level attained in first year university learning. It is hoped that this will boost the confidence of teachers and equip them with sufficient teaching skills to carry out their duties in schools more effectively. The KDPM Curriculum operates a flexible schedule to accommodate individual student teacher's ability to follow

the course. This is to enable mastery learning which is trainee-centred, through learning modules adapted to suit the ability of student teachers in the subject or field offered (Malaysia, 1995). The "how to" aspect of the teaching and learning process in specialised areas, which include "pedagogical content knowledge" and "knowledge and skills across curriculum" are emphasised to raise the ability of teachers in managing learning.

The KDPM Curriculum integrates knowledge, skills and values across subject components, practicum and co-curricular activities. To achieve the integration, the curriculum is introduced through its five main components, namely, "knowledge and specialised skills"; "basis to being a dynamic teacher"; "knowledge and professional skills"; "practicum"; and "self-enrichment". Table 1 presents the breakdown of the components, number of credits and percentages for each component of the KDPM curriculum.

Table 1: Components of the KDPM Curriculum

Components		Credits	Percentages
1.	Knowledge and Specialised Skills [Two Areas of Specialisation ]	64	53
2.	Basis to being a Dynamic Teacher	26	22
3.	Knowledge of Professional Skills	15	13
4.	Practicum	12	10
5.	Self-enrichment	3	2

Candidates applying for the June 1996 KDPM in-take had the option of choosing two areas of specialisation or a double major from a list of 13 subjects, namely, Malay, English, Chinese or Tamil Studies, Islamic Studies, Music Studies, Mathematics, Science, Local and Living Skills, Moral Education, and Physical and Health Education. The choice of subjects were based on the interest, ability, as well as academic qualifications of the candidates.

### **The KDPM Music Studies**

The Music Studies is a subject offered within the DPM. It provides training for student teachers to acquire specialised skills required for teaching music, which is in line with the aims of the KBSR Music Education Programme. The objective of the KDPM Music Studies is to provide basic music knowledge and teaching skills to student teachers so that they will be able to effectively implement the KBSR Music Education Programme in primary school level. Besides helping student teachers acquire music teaching skills, the KDPM Music Studies inculcates musical knowledge, music appreciation, and music education pedagogy to equip the student teacher as a music educator. Reinforcing the importance of music teaching skills, the syllabus of the KDPM Music Studies is formulated in accordance with the KBSR Music Syllabus [amended in September 1992] which emphasises music activities on singing, music with movement, and playing of musical instruments (Malaysia, 1998).



The fields of study within the KDPM Music Studies Curriculum include music rudiments, singing, playing of musical instruments, teaching pedagogy, music history and appreciation, and educational technology. Table 2 presents the course structure of the KDPM Music Studies from Semester One to Six, outlining the different fields of study and contact hours.

**Table 2: Course Structure of the KDPM Music Studies [Semester 1 - 6]**

Fields of Study	Sem.1 Hours	Sem.2 Hours	Sem.3 Hours	Sem.4 Hours	Sem.5 Hours	Sem.6 Hours	Total Hours
1. Music Rudiments	30	15	15	30	15	-	105
2. Singing	30	30	30	-	15	-	105
3. Playing of Instruments	30	30	30	15	15	-	120
4. Pedagogy	30	30	30	30	60	-	180
5. History and Appreciation	-	15	15	15	15	-	60
6. Information Technology	-	-	15	-	15	-	30
7. Practicum	-	2W	-	6W	-	16W	24W
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>135</b>		<b>600</b>

Note: Music and Movement is introduced in Teaching Pedagogy  
Sem.= Semester, W= Weeks

As music education is activity-based which requires specialised teaching skills, the acquisition of classroom-based and music teaching skills are paramount to the teachers. Through the teaching-learning strategies employed in teacher education and the various components of the KDPM Music Studies presented in the course, student teachers are introduced music teaching skills which they will apply in schools.